

The Power of the Gospel of Christ

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek." (Romans 1:16 NKJ)

Read also 1 Corinthians 1:17-31

The question that comes to mind is, *"In what way is the gospel of Christ powerful?"* The apostle also says this in 1 Corinthians 1:18. In that verse we read, *"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* (1 Corinthians 1:18) The gospel is what Christ accomplished on behalf sinners like you and me in His death and resurrection. And when it is proclaimed to others it is a powerful message, but in what way? What is in the message of the cross that makes it so powerful or effective?

In verse 17 of 1 Corinthians Chapter 1 the apostle tell us that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, lest the cross of Christ should made of no effect with the wisdom of men; *"persuasive words of human wisdom"* (2:4). When the gospel message is faithfully proclaimed to others the effect of it will *"demonstrate of the Spirit and the power"* so our faith is not in the wisdom of men but in the power of God (2:5). And the question still remains unanswered – *In what way is the gospel the power of God to salvation for all who being saved?*

The answer lies in the clue given in verses 4 and 5 of 1 Corinthians Chapter 2. In those two verses it is said that men are persuaded to receive the gospel message *"in the demonstration of the Spirit and power."* This demonstration of the Spirit and of power is explained in verses 12-16 of that same Chapter in Corinthians. Those who are persuaded by the preaching of the gospel of Christ have the Holy Spirit teaching them that the gospel message being preached is true – the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of the listener of the good news so that he might know and understand *"the things that have been freely given to us by God"* (v. 12).

The natural man who is not washed and regenerated by the Holy Spirit does not receive the gospel message. Why? Because he is dead in his trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1) and his mind has darkened by sin so that he is not capable of receiving spiritual truths (i.e., the gospel of Christ) (1 Corinthians 2:14). But the person who has received the Spirit of God gives evidence of that by understanding the spiritual truths preached to him and embracing them by faith with a believing heart. He is said to have the *"mind of Christ"* in verse 15 because the Holy Spirit dwells in him teaching the things of God through the word of God (v. 13). This is the power of God to salvation – the Third Person of the Triune God at work in the heart and mind of the sinner, shining

the light of the gospel in his darkened mind and giving new life and faith in Jesus Christ. Without this power of the Holy Spirit at work, no one would come to faith in Jesus Christ – it would just be as "*foolishness to him*" (v. 14). God uses the gospel message to call men to Him and be saved – and men come to Christ because He draws them to Himself by the power of the Holy Spirit (see John 6:44, 65).

It is in this way that the gospel is "*the power of God to salvation.*"

As believers in Christ, we have a powerful message, a message of hope and help, a message of salvation to all who are being saved. One man plants the seed, another waters, but it is God that causes the increase – the preaching of the gospel is the means God uses to save men and women from every nation, tribe and tongue (see, Revelation 5:9). And its power is the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts to believe the message preached. And their faith will not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. To God alone be the glory, power and honor, forever!!!